

Law Enforcement News

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Danger from behind

Concern grows over Ford Crown Victoria gas-tank explosions

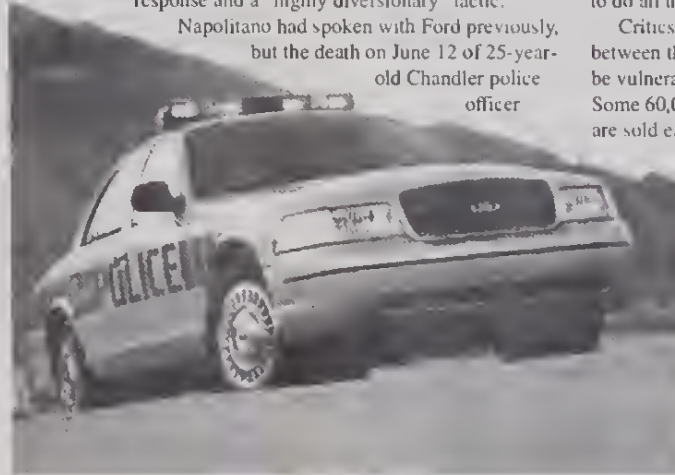
Concerns about the safety of the Ford Crown Victoria Police Interceptor, perhaps the most popular vehicle used in law enforcement work, has prompted lawsuits by jurisdictions nationwide over the past several months, a trend that began in Arizona, where three officers have died in fiery crashes since 1998.

In the past 20 years, fires allegedly caused by the location of the vehicle's gas tank have killed at least 11 officers nationwide. In 2001, Phoenix police officer Jason Schechterle was disfigured with burns to the face, head and neck when his vehicle was hit by a cab going more than 100 miles per hour. A puncture to the gas tank caused the explosion.

Ford settled lawsuits with the families of Arizona Department of Public Safety Officers Floyd "Skip" Fink and Juan Cruz for undisclosed amounts. Fink died on Feb. 18, 2000, and Cruz on Dec. 9, 1998.

In June, Attorney General Janet Napolitano entered into an agreement with the Ford Motor Company to investigate why the car was so prone to gas-tank explosions when struck from the rear. The action was promptly denounced by safety groups who called it a "woefully inadequate" response and a "highly diversionary" tactic.

Napolitano had spoken with Ford previously, but the death on June 12 of 25-year-old Chandler police officer



Robert Nielsen added urgency to the negotiations, said Chief Assistant Attorney General Tom Prose.

"We're going to follow up on our past meeting with Ford to put together a plan to solve the problems with the Police Interceptor," Prose told The Associated Press. "They have said they want to do all they can to make this a safer vehicle."

Critics contend that the car's gas tank, located between the rear bumper and the axle, causes it to be vulnerable to explosions when hit from behind. Some 60,000 Crown Victoria Police Interceptors are sold each year, and company officials estimate that there are at least 400,000 Police Interceptors on the road in the United States.

The latest jurisdiction to take Ford to court is Cleveland, which on Aug. 28 filed a federal class-action suit on behalf of law enforcement agencies throughout Ohio. The suit lists seven separate Crown Victoria fuel tank fires in 2000 and 2001, all of which led to injuries or deaths. However, none of

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Illinois docs are armed & ready to roll with SWAT

They've never drawn their weapons, and they probably never will, but on the off chance that the tactical EMS team that accompanies Peoria and Peoria County, Ill.'s SWAT unit gets caught in a cross fire, they're armed and ready.

Known as STATT, for Special Tactical Assistance Trauma Team, the three-year-old unit comprises four emergency care doctors and four paramedics who are on call 24-hours-a-day for both law enforcement agencies. The team's mission is to provide medical support during a raid, staying close enough to the action to respond within 30 seconds.

"Most of the raids are just high-risk search warrants or drug raids, maybe a barricaded suspect occasionally," Dr.

John Wipfler, an emergency room doctor at the Saint Francis Medical Center, said in an interview with Law Enforcement News. "We will stay behind hard cover, maybe 50 to 100 yards away while the team carries out its mission. Then, if they do need medical care, we're right there."

Another reason for at least training with weapons, said Wipfler, is so they know how to remove them safely if an officer is shot.

"He may be going into shock, not thinking clearly, and the first thing we need to do is disarm them, take away their pistol, their backup gun, and whatever is strapped on them," he said.

Wipfler said the move toward tactical EMS units began in the 1960s dur-



An officer down with a "neck injury" during a training drill. Tactical EMS officers first remove weapons from a patient for safety purposes.

ing the Watts riots in Los Angeles, when police there began using the "equivalent of paramedics" to provide close medical support. Since the mid-1990s, the popularity of such teams has soared to the point where half to three-quarters of the nation's SWAT units have

some kind of medical support personnel, he said.

Wipfler's STATT team was approved by the Illinois Department of Public Health in 1998, the first in the state to be certified as a tactical EMS unit. Since then, the members have helped at least five other teams get up and running throughout Illinois, Wipfler told LEN.

"Back in 1998, there was a police chief that didn't really like EMS too much and wasn't really comfortable with the idea of doctors and medics working with SWAT teams," he said. "He was worried we were going to shoot ourselves in the feet and sue the city. The Peoria County Sheriff's Department is the one that really picked up the ball."

Arming medical personnel is controversial, acknowledged Wipfler. In fact, STATT is not authorized to carry weapons when the call out comes from the city police department, which considers them civilians. The sheriff's department, however, has sworn in each of the team's members as auxiliary deputies who can arm themselves when

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NYC cops have their contract, but victory is in the eye of the beholder

New York City police officers may have a new contract but it doesn't appear to have done much to improve morale, with officers blaming both the city and union officials for a pact that will give them only an 11.5-percent pay hike over two years — half of what they had demanded.

The city's Patrolmen's Benevolent Association was hailing the new contract as a victory, yet only weeks earlier the union had brought the issue of sagging morale into sharp focus when it took the unusual step of posting out-of-town job openings on its Web site for the benefit of underpaid members

of New York's Finest.

One Bronx cop, Officer Vince DeLuca of the 46th Precinct, called the new contract "an absolute disgrace."

"It shows how much the mayor and the city think of cops," DeLuca told The New York Daily News. "We asked for 23 percent, and we got shafted."

The raise was awarded by a state arbitration panel, which rejected Mayor Michael Bloomberg's plan to give officers a 14-percent increase over 30 months and a 20-minute shift reduction in return for 10 additional work days a year. Bloomberg's proposal was roundly derided by the rank-and-file

and their union leaders.

"They wanted us to work 10 additional days — that's two more weeks — or have our police officers on the street for 16 hours," PBA president Patrick Lynch told The Daily News. "That would have been deadly for us and for the city. And, on top of that, they wanted to undervalue us for our time."

Bloomberg did not sign off on the new contract, Lynch noted. "The mayor has never negotiated with us," he said. "He should put his money where his mouth is."

Bloomberg has repeatedly said that

city employees need to agree to productivity changes in exchange for raises. The mayor called the city's contract offer a "missed opportunity" which could have brought officers more money and improved safety. The union, he said, will now get "exactly to the penny" what it had been offered in 2001 by then-mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani.

Al O'Leary, a spokesman for the PBA, insisted that the new contract was a victory. It is the first, he said, to break away from pattern bargaining — that is, giving each of the city's unions the same deal. Also, the increase was

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Around the Nation

Northeast



CONNECTICUT — After a meeting with the Gay Officers Action League of New England, state police officials have agreed to name a liaison to gays to address allegations of workplace harassment. The move came after the reassignment of 11 Wayne Rioux and Master Sgt. Frank Peters for allegedly making inappropriate comments. Public Safety Commissioner Arthur Spada also said that the agency would look at training curriculum.

MAINE — Officers from the Pittsfield police, the Somerset County Sheriff's Department and the State Police were dispatched to a Pittsfield address on Aug. 30 in response to an "officer down" call that was later believed to be a hoax. Someone using an illegal radio got on a police channel and said "Code 33. Shots fired. Shots fired." Pittsfield Sgt. Timothy Roussin said he thinks the prank was the work of a group of young adults who were responsible for other incidents and vandalism this summer.

The Portland international jetport is testing a new employee identification scanning machine. The machine takes 90 measurements of a person's hand and stores them in a database.

MARYLAND — U. S. Park Police Officer Hakeem Farthing, 28, was killed by a drunken driver on a roadside while investigating an accident on Aug. 11. The driver has been charged with involuntary manslaughter and driving under the influence.

Two Prince George County sheriff's officers, Cpl. James V. Arnaud, 53, and Deputy Sheriff Elizabeth Licera Magruder, 30, were gunned down by 23-year-old James Logan, whom they were trying to take away for psychiatric care. When the officers arrived at Logan's house, he came out of his bedroom shooting and then fled. He was found in a shed behind an apartment complex after a 30-hour manhunt and charged with first-degree murder.

A federal judge has ordered the Maryland State Police to pay over \$665,000 to retired state trooper H. Kevin Knussman for denying him parental leave because of his gender. Knussman had requested, and was denied, several weeks leave in 1994 to care for his newborn daughter and his wife, who suffered serious complications from the pregnancy. The bulk of the award covers legal fees and costs, while \$40,000 is for damages for emotional distress.

Law enforcement officials are incensed at Montgomery County Judge Durke G. Thompson for allowing a sex offender, Sidney R. Richardson, to go back to living with the stepdaughter he went to jail for abusing. In addition to a prosecutor's objection, Richardson's therapist and probation officer had opposed the move. Further sexual contact came to light last fall after the girl, now 15, gave birth.

NEW HAMPSHIRE — Capping months of increasing tension between the town of Dover and students at McIntosh College, including 200 po-

lice calls to the college's culinary school and dormitory and more than 30 arrests of students on drug, sexual assault and other charges, police on Aug. 27 arrested nine students on drug charges and seized a dorm under federal drug forfeiture laws. Chief William Fenniman said of the dorm, "It is an open-air drug market like we've never seen in the city."

NEW JERSEY — The Monmouth County prosecutors' office has taken over operation of the Keansburg Police Department after acting chief Michael Kennedy made a racial slur over the police radio. The prosecutor said that Kennedy does not face criminal charges but administrative sanctions were possible. Prosecutor John Kaye also ordered all of the county's chief law enforcement executives to undergo cultural diversity training.

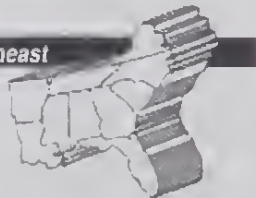
On Aug. 29, Passaic Mayor Sammy Rivera and Police Chief Stanley Jarensky announced an initiative to train city and school workers and put more cops on the street to root out fake identifications. The move came after police arrested a group of people for running a false document ring. Police discovered more than 2,000 fake Social Security and resident alien identification cards.

NEW YORK — New York City police officer Dale Enton, 34, suffered a brain aneurysm Aug. 23 while chasing a wife-beating suspect in the South Jamaica section of Queens and died a few days later in a local hospital. His supervisor, Deputy Insp. John Essig, said that Enton, a private pilot who hoped to join the police aviation unit, was in excellent physical condition.

A Manhattan judge has refused to let New York City block a notice of claim from Police Officer Anna Taha, who says she suffers respiratory damage because of her work at the site of the World Trade Center collapse from Sept. 13 to Dec. 2. The city said it had failed to properly investigate Taha's claim because it was filed after the 90-day deadline. The ruling could affect hundreds of notices that are expected to be filed by firefighters and police.

PENNSYLVANIA — The Manheim Borough Council was presented last month with a petition from residents who are requesting that police officers wear the actual American flag on their uniforms instead of just wearing a badge on both sleeves that includes a shield with the flag. Although Police Chief Barry Weidman said that the department prefers the uniforms the way they are, he believes that some compromise can be reached.

Southeast



FLORIDA — The Jacksonville Port Authority plans to hire a new security director and have 10 Jacksonville sheriff's officers performing security duties for the port by October. It also plans to implement a security badge system for anyone entering its marine terminals. Executive Director Rick Ferrin said he is expecting future state and federal money to help offset the

personnel and capital expenses.

GEORGIA — As of the end of August, Atlanta police had shot 12 people this year, five of them fatally. The total for the first eight months of 2002 is more than in any of the past six years. After the latest two fatal shootings, new Police Chief Richard Pennington suspended undercover vice operations and ordered a review of department policies on firing weapons.

LOUISIANA — New Orleans homicide detective Bernard Crowden was doing the paperwork for a homicide case while at his off-duty security job at a bus station, when the suspect in the case walked up to him and asked him where he could catch a cab. Crowden quickly arrested Tran Hughes, 22, who had just gotten off a bus from Houston. Crowden said that he was probably the only officer on the job who would have recognized Hughes or known he was wanted for murder.

The Kenner Police department has purchased an \$80,000 shooting simulator, in which a computer presents a virtual crime in progress and suspects shooting airguns that launch plastic balls. Training officer Robert Lee said the simulator makes training as realistic as possible. Officers' guns also emit air-pressure casings from their guns and, just as in real life, the weapons can jam.

In the French Quarter of New Orleans, a new organization, the Citizens' Organization for Police Support in the 8th District (COPS 8), will address the concerns of the gay community. The group will help officers buy uniforms, supplies, and equipment so that they can do their jobs, and also promote citizen involvement. The group is in part a response to several recent incidents in which gay people have been attacked or harassed in the streets.

The New Orleans City Council has approved a plan to explore the feasibility of "bulletproofing" police cruisers, following the death last month of Officer Christopher Russell, who was shot in the head as he sat behind the wheel of his patrol car. According to preliminary research by council staff members, bulletproof glass would cost \$6,000 to \$12,000 per vehicle, and bulletproofing a door would cost an additional \$800.

SOUTH CAROLINA — The state forensic DNA lab is applying for a federal grant to clear a backlog of DNA evidence from rape cases, which was created when the State Law Enforcement Division obtained the technology to compare rape kit samples to a DNA database.

TENNESSEE — City officials in Gruetli-Laager and neighboring Palmer have voted to shut down their small police departments. Gruetli-Laager Alderman Wayne Grimes, who cast the only vote against the shutdown, said that he thought the reason the agencies were disbanded was because "they were doing their job too good." In addition to busting 67 methamphetamine labs in the first seven months of the year, the department also cracked down on selling beer to minors, angering some market owners. The two departments jointly arrested Gruetli-Laager Alderman Jim Layne Aug. 12 on drug charges for allegedly buying a controlled substance without a prescription.

Hamilton County Chancery Judge Frank W. Brown III ruled Aug. 13 that the Chattanooga Police Department must release the photographs of six officers to a local television station. The decision came in a case involving a man who died in police custody. The police had barred the release of the photographs but the judge said the department cannot urge its officers to get to know citizens and do acts "which promote good police work...and then deny a photograph of an officer involved in an incident that sparks public interest and attention."

VIRGINIA — The State Police have been awarded a \$13.9-million federal grant for terrorism preparedness. The police will use the money to equip seven regional response teams made up of troopers, crime scene technicians, arson and bomb specialists, tactical personnel and canine units.

Roanoke police officials on Aug. 22 launched a new Take Home Vehicle Program, which is aimed at increasing police visibility and encouraging more officers to live within the city limits. Only those who live in the city — currently just 32 of the department's 244 officers — are eligible for take-home cars.

Midwest



INDIANA — The South Bend Common Council has adopted an anti-loitering ordinance similar to one in Chicago, aimed at restricting gang and drug-related activities. As in Chicago, certain neighborhoods will be designated "hot spots" with input from neighbors and council representatives and crime statistics. These are then presented to the chief for consideration and designation.

Members of the Elkhart Police Department completed their training this summer in Verbal Judo, the communications program designed by a former police officer and English professor. The program is intended to help officers to stay calm when a suspect isn't, and to not respond to verbal abuse. Cpl. Steve Stewart, a trainer, told his fellow officers, "We're going to teach you to verbally hook and book."

KENTUCKY — Lexington police have begun enforcing the Lexington Area Party Plan, an ordinance passed last December that punishes those who have too many loud parties in their homes. If a residence gets two citations within a year, police will send a warning letter and a "no party property" sticker.

Gary Wayne Wilson, 48, who was convicted of shooting Maysville Police Officer Danny Hay to death in 1979, was freed last month by a parole board after serving 22 years of his 40-year sentence. Wilson will remain on supervised parole until 2021. Hay, who was only 22 at the time of his death, was shot three times while searching for an intruder inside a grocery store. He is the only Maysville officer ever to have been killed in the line of duty.

MICHIGAN — Overtime for policing Detroit's entertainment and special

events such as baseball games, youth festivals and the state fair are draining the police department's budget. Deputy Chief Bryan Turnbull said that in addition to \$265,000 in overtime, the department has had to pull officers out of neighborhood precincts.

A Secret Service agent who scrawled "Islam is Evil," and "Christ is King," on a Muslim prayer calendar while searching the Dearborn home of an Arab American suspected of having \$12 million in phony cashier's checks was suspended without pay for six months in August. The agent, a 10-year-veteran, will not face criminal charges.

Hazel Park police officer Jessica Wilson, 26, has been awarded a posthumous Police Medal of Honor by her department for disabling a suspect and preventing the death or injury of other officers. On Aug. 4, Wilson was on her way to tell a man not to walk his dog without a leash, when the suspect, Hans-George Hofe, allegedly came at her with a shotgun. The two exchanged gunfire and Wilson was killed after she shot Hofe. Charged with first-degree murder, Hofe is in critical condition in a local hospital. Wilson is survived by her husband of two months, who is a Detroit police officer.

Prisoners at the Saginaw Correctional Facility have built walls and a new storage building at a police shooting range in Auburn, which is used by state, county and local law enforcement. No ammunition is stored at the site, which is used about eight months of the year.

OHIO — Columbus police who answered a call on Aug. 21 at a home where the front door was standing open found the house abandoned — almost. When they left the house, they were covered with thousands of fleas — so many that one officer said it looked like his partner's pants were moving. The infestation spread to five officers and five police cars, and forced the closing of a precinct substation. The officers were scrubbed down at a local hospital, and the cars and substation were fumigated by exterminators.

The Geauga County Sheriff's Department is the first law enforcement agency in the state to use an email service to alert residents if registered sex offenders move into their neighborhood. The service, offered by Watch Systems, a Louisiana-based company, cost \$3,500.

On Aug. 6, the Fairborn Police Department launched an Internet investigations unit to address the growing number of computer crimes, especially those involving pedophiles. Community and business members, as well as the police advisory board, donated funds to create the unit, and 5 O'clock Computers of Beavercreek donated the computer equipment.

WEST VIRGINIA — Lawyers from the Charleston law firm of Steptoe and Johnson are urging the U. S. State Department to create a database from unsuccessful green card applications rather than shredding them. They've even offered to test the idea at no cost to the government. While they believe that the information could be useful in the war on terrorism, other immigration lawyers worry that there might be privacy ramifications.



Plains States

IOWA — The Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco and Firearms has posted an office and agent in Cedar Rapids — the second of three branch offices scheduled to open in the state. The agent will help authorities investigate violent crimes involving firearms and play an active role in Project Safe Neighborhood, a federal program that focuses on reducing gun-related violence.

KANSAS — The director of the state Bureau of Investigation, Larry Welch, said that in the year since the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, 40 people, mainly from the Middle East, have been arrested for visa violations, and the agency handled 317 terrorist-related calls and checked into 59 anthrax scares. Welch added that 90 percent of the agency's counter-terrorism work was done at the request of federal officials whose resources were strained.

MINNESOTA — Minneapolis Police Officer Melissa Schmidt, 35, was fatally wounded and her attacker, 60-year-old Martha Donald, was also killed during a police call at a public housing complex on Aug. 1. Schmidt and Officer Tammy Friestleben were investigating a report of a woman with a gun and asked Donald if they could search her car. She said that she first needed to use the bathroom. She went into a toilet stall and then came out shooting. Both officers returned fire. They had patted her down before she went to the bathroom but police believe she held the gun between her buttocks.

MISSOURI — An ordinance has been proposed in St. Peters that would require that products containing ephedrine and pseudoephedrine be kept behind store counters, in hopes of reducing the theft of the product and making it harder for manufacturers of methamphetamine. Although state law already restricts consumers from buying more than three packages of products containing the drugs in a single transaction, the products are being shoplifted regularly. The St. Peters ordinance would limit customers to no more than three packages in a 48-hour period.

Crediting tougher law enforcement and citizen involvement, Kansas City officials have announced a 13-percent drop in violent crime and a 26-percent drop in homicides during the first eight months of 2002.

Town and Country Police Chief John Copeland is being credited with the idea of using an automated phone tree system to allow more than 50 St. Louis-area law enforcement agencies to get e-mails from the FBI and a recorded phone call within minutes of a terrorist alert. Town and Country got a state grant that covered about 75 percent of the \$18,000 cost of the communicator.

Sikeston police officials admit that they use profiling, but except for a few bad sports, the people they profile aren't complaining. Vehicles that appear to contain families are picked for traffic stops and then, in what officials call a "friendly abduction," are given tickets

to the Sikeston Jaycee Bootheel rodeo. The friendly abductions have been part of the rodeo since 1952, but were stopped a few years ago. Last year, the idea was revised. In addition to rodeo tickets, family members get T-shirts and shorts, a barbecue meal, anniversary bracelets and a day of VIP treatment and "Southern hospitality."

A Highland dispatcher has been fired and the city is being sued for more than \$50,000, after a woman says that she was beaten, raped and held hostage by her boyfriend for seven hours on Feb. 14. The woman maintains that the dispatcher failed to send police when her 911 call was cut off when her boyfriend tore the phone out of the wall. According to the lawsuit, the dispatcher failed to follow the procedures that require her either to return the call or send police to investigate.

NEBRASKA — Alleging mental anguish, Omaha Police Officer Gregory Reisbig has filed suit against a citizen who filed a complaint against him. The defendant in the lawsuit, Charles Rucker, had complained that Reisbig was "way over the line" when he allegedly used excessive force to arrest Rucker for threatening a former girlfriend and her new boyfriend with a gun. A police investigation cleared Reisbig of the allegations and said he acted appropriately. The lawsuit is the first of its kind in the state.

Authorities in York are warning residents about pre-teens sniffing Freon fumes from air conditioners to get high. A 12-year-old girl was recently revived after being found unconscious beside an air conditioner.

Con-Agra Foods is building the Omaha Police Department a new \$400,000 facility for its mounted patrol, which is being evicted from its current location. Con-Agra will build the facility on its corporate campus and lease it to the city for a nominal fee.

WYOMING — The state may be moving toward joining several other states in the Emergency Management Assistance Compact, which establishes guidelines for states to provide aid to each other in case of emergency. The state needing assistance would be responsible for the out-of-state costs and liable for the personnel. The parameters would include those disasters that are not eligible for federal assistance. Approval of the compact is currently making its way through the Legislature.



Southwest

ARIZONA — A newly established police force for the Hualapai Indian Tribe began providing its own law enforcement services on Aug. 30. Tribal Police Chief Dale Lent and three other officers will split 12-hour shifts until more officers can be recruited.

On the Tohono O'odham Nation's reservation near Tucson, Border Patrol agents found the decomposing naked body of a man hanging from a tree by a belt around his neck. The body was believed to be that of an illegal immi-

grant, and had been there for several weeks. Tribal police are treating the death as a homicide, which a tribal official said is the practice for all death investigations until proven otherwise.

COLORADO — Citing a budget squeeze, Denver District Attorney Bill Ritter has disbanded a special gang unit of prosecutors in order to trim spending by 5 percent. Capt. Joseph Padilla of the Denver Police Department's gang unit said that the move comes at a bad time, with gang violence on the rise and programs like the Metropolitan Gang Coalition, which offer alternatives to the gang lifestyle, also shutting down due to lack of funding.

NEW MEXICO — In what relatives believe was a case of "suicide by cop," Harris Frangos, 53, was shot dead in Albuquerque Aug. 7 after he stood up from his wheelchair and fired a sawed-off shotgun at police. Frangos had a note with him that was addressed to a childhood friend, Nick Bakas, the city's chief public safety officer. Four officers — three from the University of New Mexico campus police and one Albuquerque officer — were involved in the shooting. Both agencies said the officers acted appropriately.

OKLAHOMA — The Tulsa City Council has appropriated \$61,000 for a study to determine whether differences exist between the public's perceptions of the police and the police department's perception of itself. The research was suggested by a police-citizen committee formed last year to explore the need for community oversight of the police.

TEXAS — A proposal by the San Antonio Police Officers' Association to generate \$7.3 million for police raises by lopping off the top posts in the department and demoting all the deputy and assistant chiefs to captains is meeting sharp opposition. The police brass, who are also dues paying, card-carrying members of the union, have hired an attorney and plan to file a lawsuit if the union does not withdraw the contract proposal. Union president Rene Rodriguez accused the chiefs of protecting their own interests. Police Chief Albert Ortiz said that the move would stagnate promotions and remove his ability to appoint officers to the higher ranks — a tool that helps him diversify the department's leadership.

A program in Round Rock that pairs police officers with volunteers from the Latino community is helping police to keep up with the town's growing Spanish-speaking population. The officers take Spanish lessons at the department and then meet with the volunteers, who help reinforce those lessons. The number of Latinos has more than doubled in Round Rock from 5,795 in 1990 to 13,511 in 2000. Officers will receive incentive pay for learning Spanish.

Two of the fourteen Irving police recruits who were fired in May for cheating on exams have been hired by other North Texas police departments. The police chiefs of Oak Point and Crowley, where the recruits were hired, say they don't doubt the officers' integrity.

The 1993 promotion of 106 minority Houston police officers has been upheld by a federal appellate court. The promotions had come as part of a settle-

ment in an 18-year-old lawsuit filed by minority police officers, who charged that police exams unfairly hindered minority promotions. However, police unions and other groups opposed the settlement and defended the exam, sparking the protracted legal battle. The appellate court ruled that the settlement was not an abuse of the lower court's discretion.

State Attorney General John Cornyn, who is running for the U.S. Senate, has opened an investigation into the 1999 drug sweep in which about 12 percent of the town of Tulia's black population was arrested. In July 1999, 46 people, all but three of whom were black, were arrested on drug charges. In almost all the cases, the testimony of an undercover agent, Tom Coleman, was the sole evidence against the defendants.

UTAH — Authorities issued a terrorism alert in early September after a man in dark clothing was spotted intruding on the grounds of the Desert Chemical Depot near Salt Lake City, which stores gas and chemical munitions slated to be destroyed. The commander of the depot, which holds the world's largest stockpile of chemical weapons, said the compound's security was never at risk.



Far West

ALASKA — An Anchorage woman who called 911 after being shot four times had to wait 48 minutes for help to arrive while dispatchers bungled her call and disregarded the address she gave them. Patti Godfrey, 52, was shot by Karen Brand, 33, who was having an affair with her husband, Glenn Godfrey, 53. Brand also shot Glenn, killing him, before turning the gun on herself and committing suicide. Dispatchers relied on inadequate computer information that did not have Godfrey's address in the database. They nonetheless persisted in keeping the phone connection with Godfrey, who hung up on them twice, and eventually police got to her.

CALIFORNIA — Officials in Monterey County have agreed to recognize picture identification cards issued by foreign countries like Mexico. According to county supervisor Lou Calcagno, a lack of valid identification often hurt local Mexican agricultural and hospitality workers.

Gary Patrick Gregory, 32, who faces murder and elder abuse charges in Los Angeles County for the beating death of his 66-year-old mother, Nancy Gregory, was sentenced in Kern County on Aug. 30 to three years in prison for leading police on a high-speed chase before her body was found. The chase ended in a 40-minute standoff in which Gregory told police he wanted them to kill him. During the standoff, California Highway Patrol officers became concerned for Nancy Gregory's welfare. She was later found dead after police tried to contact her.

The results of a police promotional exam in Santa Ana were disqualified after officials learned that some offic-

ers had access in advance to the questions. The city attorney's office is investigating.

Residents at the Harbour Vista condominium complex in Huntington Beach have been responsible for more than 144 visits from the police since January. The trouble started when, after some trouble over parking privileges, a resident, John Rogers, mounted 15 video cameras in and around his home to record everything that happens. Frightened neighbors responded by videotaping him in return, and at least one has been arrested for threatening him. Police say that their hands are tied because no laws are actually being broken, but the situation is demanding far too much attention and they fear it could escalate.

NEVADA — Former White Pine County sheriff's deputy Chris Perez has been acquitted of all charges of rape and sexual assault, after having been accused of using his law enforcement position to sexually assault two women, and attempting to assault a third and batter a fourth woman. Perez will not be getting his job back, however, as he admitted to having consensual sex with one of the alleged assault victims in the back of his squad car. She was only 16 at the time.

OREGON — The Portland Citizen's Crime Commission, an arm of the Portland Business Alliance, has issued a report urging officials to study and prioritize ways to protect the city's infrastructure from terrorist attacks. The report urged support for a property-tax increase that would pay for specialized training and equipment for emergency personnel.

WASHINGTON — Spokane police are attributing a surge in car thefts to local drug abusers who use the vehicles as "meth taxis." Because many of the stolen vehicles were found near where they were stolen, Police Chief Roger Bragdon is speculating that methamphetamine users were using one car to get to a drug house and another one to get home. Idaho state police have noticed a similar pattern in the Coeur d'Alene area.

Juvenile offenders being held at the Naselle Youth Camp, in the southwest corner of the state, are being trained to put out wildfires. They plant trees, clear brush and maintain trails as part of their training while they wait to put out fires, for which they will get paid. The camp, which has four boy fire crews and one girl crew, is the only youth rehabilitation center in the state.

A high-speed police chase came to an end in Spokane on Sept. 1 when Washington State Trooper Bill Dingfield tumbled his unmarked car into the fleeing vehicle, in a move known as a pit maneuver, and spun the vehicle around. City police and sheriff's vehicles then came up alongside and boxed the vehicle in. Dingfield said it was the second time he had used the pit maneuver, and that it had worked out well both times.

A bank robber in Belleville dropped around \$3,500 of the loot, before making his escape. Police began picking up the bills, which were blowing around outside the bank, with tweezers to preserve any fingerprint evidence.

Bumpy road

He may have the support of community leaders, county officials and the rank-and-file, but the new chief of the Prince George's County, Md., Police Department, **Gerald M. Wilson**, still faces a demoralized force and a burgeoning crime rate — either of which could undermine even the most auspicious beginnings, observers have noted.

The County Council unanimously voted to confirm Wilson's appointment on July 30. The 39-year-old Wilson had been serving as acting chief since February, following the abrupt and still-unexplained resignation of **John S. Farrell**.

"[Wilson's] relationship with the men and women of the Prince George's County department will be directly impacted by the hard decisions and how he makes them," wrote **Anthony M. Walker**, president of the local Fraternal Order of Police lodge, in a letter to his membership. "Giving [Wilson] the proper resources will help him address the difficult decisions that will lie ahead."

Walker wrote that robberies have increased by 12 percent and homicides by 15 percent so far this year. Carjackings have soared in the county by 34 percent. Moreover, the department is operating with about 100 officers fewer than its authorized strength.

What has earned Wilson high marks is his willingness to listen, said Walker, adding that it does not hurt that the new chief comes from within the ranks. Wilson is a 18-year veteran who joined the county force two years after enrolling at Prince George's Community College.

Said one unidentified officer to The Washington Post: "With [Wilson], you just know this is where he wants to be. You don't get the sense he'd rather be anywhere else." The new chief, the officer said, is trying to change the department's image, which has been sullied by accusations of brutality, racism and misconduct. The 1,400-member agency is also the subject of a Jus-

tice Department probe.

Wilson's approach stands in sharp contrast to Farrell's, said police. FOP president Walker said Farrell, an outsider with ties to former Attorney General **Janet Reno** when she was a district attorney in Florida, was not accessible, nor did he have the personal connection to the force that it wanted or expected.

"Unfortunately, the things he did do always came after we put extreme media attention on," he said. "He never came up with those things on his own."

During his five months as acting chief, Wilson held nearly a dozen press conferences. In March, after just two weeks on the job, he invited television news cameras and reporters to police headquarters for a demonstration of how suspects are restrained without risk and released detailed information about an incident involving the death of a Fairmount Heights man, **Jason Smith**, who had died while being restrained.

"It was a way to get the department's version, the department's spin, if you will, out there on Day One," said Wilson. "That was important to me, to show residents, yes, we're taking the incident seriously and to show officers, yes, I'll go up there and tell it like it is."

Game face

A scientist as well as a cop, **Col. Julie Jones** of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission was selected the agency's new leader in August and in the process became the first woman to head one of the state's major law enforcement agencies.

Jones, 45, has served as an FWC officer for 14 years. She holds a bachelor's and master's in biology from Florida Atlantic University.

"My most important contribution, I think, will be my perspective as one who has worked inside and outside this division and established strong working relationships with other divisions and constituents," she told The Associated Press.

Florida's FWC is the largest fish and wildlife resource agency in the nation, with 700 sworn officers authorized to enforce all of the state's laws. Its jurisdiction covers roughly 37 million acres of public and private land, 8,246 miles of tidal coastline, and 3 million acres of lakes and ponds. Conservation officers provide patrol services to Florida's rural, semi-wilderness, wilderness and off-shore areas and respond to natural disasters, search and rescue and such phenomena as wildfires, floods and hurricanes.

Selected from a field of 26 applicants, Jones's last assignment was as a captain in charge of the north central region, based in Lakeland.

Pressing concerns

It's almost frightening for mere mortals to contemplate, but Police Officer **Bill Simms** says he recently bench-pressed 515 pounds — roughly three average-sized co-workers — on one of his bad days.

There's nothing average-sized about Simms, a 5-foot-10-inch, 330-pound cop from Unalaska, Alaska, whose effort won him a silver medal at the Can-Am Police and Fire Games, held in Spokane, Wash., in July. For reasons he can't quite put his finger on, people seem to be intimidated by Simms. "I don't know why..." he said. "I'm a pretty nice guy."

Wearing custom-made uniform shirts with the long sleeves cut short to fit over his 22-inch biceps, Simms may be a nice guy, but he's also "probably the strongest person in law enforcement in the state of Alaska," said Unalaska police Sgt. **Matt Betzen**. He may well be the strongest cop in North America, given that the only person to out-press him at the Can-Am games was a Canadian firefighter, who edged Simms by five pounds.

Simms proved second-to-none in the wrist-wrestling competition, bringing home a gold medal, although wrist-wrestling is not one of the Can-Am games' officially sanctioned events.

Held every two years, the Can-Am games draw some 1,850 police and firefighters from the United States and Canada. Simms, 35, was a competitive weightlifter in high school, and played college football, but it was not until he joined the Unalaska department a year ago that he began training hard again. Simms lifts two hours a day, four days a week.

After his performance in July, Simms vowed to do better at the world law enforcement power lifting championships next summer in Spain.

"I've done 600 [pounds] here in training," he told The Associated Press. "But it was 106 [degrees] there, and we were in a big circus tent. So it was even hotter in there. Being from Alaska, that was pretty hard."

"I think I'll take gold," he said about the world championships. "Not to sound too overconfident or anything, but I can do a lot more."

Real McCoy

After nearly four years as head of the Orlando Police Department, the city's first black police chief, **Jerry Demings**, is calling it quits.

Demings said he would be taking another job, but has not yet revealed what that position might be. His replacement will be Sanford, Fla., police official **Michael McCoy**, who is the second-highest ranking officer in that department and a former second-in-command with the Orlando agency.

Before taking command as chief in January 1999, Demings was a deputy chief under **Bill Kennedy** and had served 17 years on the force. A graduate of Florida State University and Orlando College, Demings had overseen investigations and drug enforcement, and had been commander of the crisis negotiation team.

Bullets & ballots

Phillip Morris NaPier, an ex-convict and candidate for governor of Maine, is tapping a base of support that other contenders might shy away from — his fellow ex-convicts and those still serving time.

The founder of **Felons United**, NaPier, 56, of Windham, is taking advantage of Maine's status as only one of two states, along with Vermont, that allow prisoners to vote. Through his Web site, www.felonsunited.com, he is urging ex-cons to move to Maine, establish residency and vote for him. NaPier would also like to see prisoners sending in their absentee ballots.

As for his campaign platform, the candidate said he would pardon every felon in Maine, legalize marijuana and casino gambling, and promote universal health care. "I would try to help people come together and help their neighbors," NaPier told The Associated Press. "I'd pull our towns together. I'd pull old people together with our young people. Everyone would have a fair shot."

NaPier campaigns in his 1979 Volkswagen van, accompanied by his Great Pyrenees dog, Belle. He served half of a 15-month sentence at the

Maine State Prison in Thomaston after being convicted of pointing a handgun at two Windham officers during a confrontation in 1995.

According to NaPier, he was firing old ammunition into a woodpile when Sgt. **Ronald Ramsdell** and his partner showed up with guns drawn. The officers fired eight times; NaPier was left with a bum leg. He wears a heavy leg brace that allows him to walk with a limp.

"They haven't paid for what they did," he told The Associated Press. "The two guys who shot me should be going to prison. The judges and prosecutors who helped to make it happen should be going to prison, too."

But Ramsdell said, "We were exonerated of everything and he was convicted of criminal charges, so I guess that speaks for itself."

PERF-ect pair

The Los Angeles Police Department's first female commander, **Betty P. Kelepecz**, was a co-winner this year of the Police Executive Research Forum's highest honors, the Gary P. Hayes Memorial Award.

Kelepecz, a 22-year veteran, was one of two female law enforcement officials to receive the Hayes award, which in the past has frequently been presented to police managers and administrators who later go on to become prominent agency heads. This year's other recipient was Minneapolis Police Department Insp. **Sbaron Lubinski**.

As head of the LAPD's Risk Management, Kelepecz works primarily on implementation of the department's federal consent decree. Lubinski, who joined the Minneapolis department in 1987, is coordinator of its joint public-private business collaboration known as HEALS, which has led to reduced homicide rates.

"Commander Kelepecz and Inspector Lubinski truly represent the best of what this award represents," said Minneapolis Chief **Robert K. Olson**, who is also PERF's president. "Their longstanding commitment to serving their communities and their ability to tackle some of the toughest policing assignments represent exactly what this award stands for."

PERF also presented its National Leadership Award, to Chicago Police Superintendent **Terry Hillard** and Lowell, Mass., Police Superintendent **Edward Davis**.

During his four-year tenure, Hillard has implemented a series of community forums which give civilians and members from all ranks of the agency a chance to speak freely on issues of concern. He has also created one of the first "repeatable, integrated information systems in the country." PERF noted, which has reduced labor costs, increased clearance rates and allowed for the identification of emerging crime trends.

In Lowell, Davis has introduced a Compstat system and is helping conduct a federally-funded project on "measuring what matters" in policing.

"Under Ed Davis's leadership, Lowell has become a city that is nationally recognized for its willingness to experiment with new ideas," said **Cbuck Wexler**, PERF's executive director.

Now you see them, now you don't

Officials in **Laconia, N.H.**, decided to look no further than their own police department for the city's new chief, and it looks as though the same will be said for the city fathers in Ocean City, Md.

Lt. Thomas J. Oettinger, a 22-year veteran, was selected by Laconia's Police Commission in August to lead the 33-member department. He will replace **Bill Baker**, who left to take a position with the Justice Department. Oettinger began his career with the University of Pennsylvania Department of Security, then spent a year with the Philadelphia Police Department. Prior to his appointment as chief, the 42-year-old Oettinger worked as a detective and has been in charge of creating the agency's Web site.

In Ocean City, **Lt. Bernadette DiPino** is expected to be given the permanent appointment as police chief when **David Massey** retires in

October. DiPino, who was the agency's first female major and lieutenant, also became its first acting chief in July. During the 14 years she has served with the department DiPino, 38, has commanded its community policing unit, and was, until her promotion, commander of the services division and had spent four years in charge of the town's quick response team. DiPino's father and grandfather both served with the Baltimore City Police Department, and her great-grandfather was once a New York City officer.

"**Kevin Lindsey**, police chief of the Town of Madison, Wis., returned to his home state of Missouri in August to assume command of the Joplin Police Department. "I'm not nervous at all. I should be," he told The Wisconsin State Journal. "I was nervous as heck coming up here."

Lindsey will go from commanding a force of 18 officers in a community of 6,000 to a 77-member department

that serves a Midwestern retail, manufacturing and medical hub, with a population that swells from 45,000 to 200,000 during the workday.

"**After Duane Pelfrey** resigned as police chief in New Miami, Ohio, following a guilty plea to a charge of dereliction of duty, town officials replaced him with Officer **Gary Vaughn**. In April, Pelfrey had accused three teenagers of plotting to kill him. All charges against the youths were dismissed in May. When sentenced, Pelfrey could face a fine of \$750 and 90 days in jail.

"**Norton Shores, Mich.**, Police Chief **Roger Doctor** took office in July as president of the state's police chiefs association. "It's a dream come true, especially when you work for it," Doctor, a 30-year law enforcement veteran, told The Associated Press. "Then it means everything to you. I'm intensely proud of being a police officer."

Solving the sex-offender-on-campus puzzle

The law's intent is fairly basic — to give those living or working at colleges and universities the same protection from convicted sex offenders as individuals in all communities have. However, there seem to be more questions than answers surrounding a federal law passed two years ago that was aimed at tracking Megan's Law registrants on campus.

The Campus Sex Crimes Prevention Act of 2000 (CSCPA) amended the Jacob Wetterling Act, one provision of which is Megan's Law. In order to receive criminal justice funding through the Edward Byrne Memorial Grant program, states must have a sex offender registry program. The CSCPA requires already-registered sex offenders who are employed or enrolled at colleges to notify the state about such enrollment or employment. The state is then responsible for informing campuses that a registrant is on campus. Should a state fail to do so, roughly 10 percent of federal crime-fighting funds could be withheld until compliance.

"It's to keep college, university and campus police departments and communities in the same loop that law enforcement and citizens would have when it comes to sex offender registry information," said S. Daniel Carter, vice president of Security on Campus Inc.,

a Pennsylvania-based organization that lobbied for the law.

The CSCPA has two other key provisions as well. Another component amends the Jeanne Clery Act, a law requiring schools that receive federal aid to make available basic security information in their annual reports. It also includes an amendment to a federal educational records privacy law in order to allow colleges to release any information they receive under a state sex offender registry program.

As matters currently stand, campus police departments must only add to their 2003 annual security report a notation as to where students and employees can find their state or county's sex-offender registry. Although the deadline for such information is actually Oct. 28, 2002, the information for this year's report has already been completed.

Still to be worked out is how states will make the sex-offender information available to the public. Although a plan for this was not included in the regulations released by the Justice Department, in a brief filed with the U.S. Supreme Court, the department said that states will be required to perform categorical notifications concerning any sex offender on campus, even if it is just a roster on a Web site, Carter told

Law Enforcement News.

"There's some controversy," said Carter. "They have not officially told the state that's how the program will work, but their interpretation was made clear in the brief filed with the Supreme Court. There's some question about how it is all going to end up working out. I don't see how they can expect states to do something they have not yet been told they are expected to do."

Scott Doner, the campus police chief at Valdosta State College in Georgia and president of the International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators (IACLEA), said that his department is required to provide access to a Web site, or inform members of the campus community as to how they can find the Lowndes County Sheriff's Department to look up registered sex offenders. Megan's Law registrants do not have to register with the campus police force, he told LEN, but they do have to register with the county when school is in session.

"And then the question comes up — and I can't answer this one — what if your school is spread through two or three counties?" Doner asked. "Which county do they register in? What if they are like these community colleges and have five campuses? Those are the questions no one can seem to answer

right now."

Initially, Doner said, the authors of the CSCPA wanted campus law enforcement to keep its own registry of sex offenders living or working on campus. The problem was that not all colleges have police forces, some just have security departments, and some do not even have that. Without the capability of running NCIC checks, those schools would be unable to access that information.

"I think that was kind of a compromise just so people would have it," Doner said. "If someone comes to me and says I want to know if John Doe is a registered sex offender in Lowndes County, my understanding is we have to provide them where they have access to it. We can do that through the sheriff's department or the Georgia Bureau of Investigation."

While poring over the roster of all 40 or so offenders listed on the county's Web site is manageable, noted Doner, the task would be far less so in a large, metropolitan jurisdiction, such as Fulton County, which includes Atlanta. The law does not require that those registrants who are working or attending class be separated out. "If you know the name of the person, it won't be that difficult, but if you're just looking to see who's there, then it might take you

a while," he said.

Another question that has yet to be answered, the chief acknowledged, is the issue of students or employees living in one state and attending school in another. "It's like anytime something new comes out, there are bugs in it," he said. "It's going to take some finesse to figure it all out."

Alan MacNutt, director of public safety at James Madison University in Harrisonburg, Va., believes the federal government may be on "the horns of a dilemma" over the CSCPA.

"This act was passed in October 2000, almost a year before 9/11," MacNutt told LEN. "I do not think the feds really want to be in a position of withholding any portion of Byrne crime-fighting funds to the states post-9/11," particularly when state budgets are so constrained due to the economic downturn, he noted.

Moreover, privacy-based legal challenges to the sex-offender registry in at least two states, Pennsylvania and Connecticut, may make implementation of the law even more difficult.

Chief Anthony Murphy of the campus police department at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, N.J., said that without a state Web site, the only way to deal with that is through local prosecutors' offices.

"In Middlesex County, before they went to the Web site, the prosecutor would be responsible for identifying where these sexual offenders lived and if you're in a certain area where this offender lives, you will be notified if they're tier 3," he told LEN. Tier 3 refers to the state's ranking of the most violent sexual predators whose presence in a community requires public notification.

Oops! Nevada cop group says it meant to "just say no" to pot decrim issue

The Nevada Conference of Police and Sheriffs last month hastily withdrew its endorsement of a ballot initiative that would decriminalize possession of up to three ounces of marijuana, claiming that board members did not realize what they were sanctioning.

The action led to the resignation of the group's president, Andy Anderson, who had helped found the 3,000-member organization 23 years ago. Known as NCOPS, it serves as an umbrella group for a number of unions representing law enforcement in Las Vegas, North Las Vegas, Henderson and the Clark County School District, among other agencies.

"I don't want NCOPS' endorsements watered down," said Anderson. "The bottom line is, I care for this or-

ganization."

The dispute began when Anderson announced on Aug. 6 that the group's board had voted 9-0 to endorse the initiative known as Question 9. The measure would amend the state's constitution to bar the arrest or prosecution of those over 21 caught with three ounces or less of pot. Pot would be sold only in state-licensed and taxed shops; sales by private individuals would remain illegal. Possession by minors would still be a crime, as would public use and driving under the influence.

Until last year, Nevada had the nation's strictest marijuana laws. If the ballot passes on Nov. 5, and then again in 2004, it would have the most lenient

NCOPS' stance. Anderson had said, was that busting people for small

amounts of marijuana was a drain on manpower. "We're not endorsing marijuana, we're not saying marijuana is good," he told The Las Vegas Review-Journal. "We're saying we should be spending our time protecting and serving the public. It's not cops for pot."

Within days, police agency and union officials objected to the endorsement. It was then revealed that Anderson had only conducted a phone survey, and that no board meeting or formal vote had taken place.

In a statement released by NCOPS, the group blamed Anderson for a "misunderstanding" and declared it had made no such endorsement. According to The Review-Journal, four of the five board members contacted by the newspaper had not understood that it was a

vote, and believed that Question 9 involved medical use of marijuana as it had in 1998 and 2000.

Mick Gillins, the NCOPS vice president who succeeded Anderson after his resignation; David Burns, the president of the Henderson Police Officers Association; Mike McBan of the North Las Vegas Police Officers Association; and Ron Cuzze of the State Peace Officers Council all told The Review-Journal that they thought Anderson was querying them on the medical marijuana issue.

David Kallas, executive director of the Las Vegas Police Protection Association, a 2,100-member union that accounts for the largest number of NCOPS members, said he was embarrassed by the endorsement.

Two candidates for Clark County sheriff, Capt. Randy Oaks and Deputy Chief Bill Young, said they opposed Question 9. Oaks said he also opposed medical marijuana, saying it has been pushed not by those who need it for illness, but by those who abused the drug.

Young said he was against the proposal because it sent the wrong message to young people. The state's current law, which makes possession of an ounce a misdemeanor, is the right approach. "If older folks want to smoke in their homes, I could care less," said Young.

Nevada would become a laughing-stock if it adopted a constitutional right to possess marijuana, said Gary Booker, Clark County's chief deputy district attorney. "Nobody else has mandated it's legal to smoke pot as a constitutional right," he told The Review-Journal. "You amend your constitution to free slaves or enact women's rights or where there is a true constitutional evil. You don't change your constitution to allow people to smoke drugs."

Changes in "state of the art" chronicled by NJ prosecutor

One era's state-of-the-art police tool can look like another era's torture device, as evidenced by a display at the Morris County, N.J., Prosecutor's Office of law enforcement and criminal memorabilia culled from the agency's past 178 years.

The collection, which can be viewed by appointment only, was dedicated last month to the memory of Paul W. McKenna Sr., a retired deputy chief of detectives and avid collector. Said Michael Rubbinaccio, the county prosecutor: "If an organization is going to appreciate who they are, they have to know the history of the department."

Among its treasures is a pair of nippers, a 19th-century version of handcuffs which were used for restraining bad guys but sometimes broke their

wrists. That side-effect was one of the reasons it fell into disuse, said Patrick Minutillo, the office's administrator and a collector who loaned the mini-museum a wealth of antique batons and handcuffs. "Today, it would bring million-dollar lawsuits," he told The Newark Star-Ledger.

Although Morris County was formed in 1739, it did not get its own prosecutor, George K. Drake, until 1824. Det. Barry Bittenmaster, the collection's curator, is still seeking Drake's portrait to add to the 14 others already on display of former prosecutors.

In those days, the prosecutor's office acted as the police force. Visitors can see in a handwritten docket from 1900 that residents were prosecuted for

such offenses as performing abortions, gambling, deserting one's family and making moonshine whiskey.

Also available for perusal are documents concerning famous murders, such as the one committed on Christmas Eve 1947 when Mary Schmeltz turned on the gas and killed her 5-year-old son. Two psychiatrists determined she was insane and Schmeltz was committed to Greystone Park Psychiatric Hospital seven days after the incident. Among the murder weapons Bittenmaster has gathered is a rope that was used to strangle Ana Ulm in Mount Arlington in August 1933, a knife used in a 1956 murder, and a gun used in a homicide a year later.

"We have a long history ourselves, and nobody knows about it," he said.

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The rhythms of a new era

Twelve months after 9/11, policing still struggles to find its place

Despite the many bureaucratic, tactical and operational changes that have taken place in policing over the past 12 months, local law enforcement is still struggling to find its role in a post-Sept. 11 world in which its federal counterparts seem to set the rules and continue to hold most if not all of the cards.

A recent sampling by Law Enforcement News of municipal and county police agencies found that training for first responders in the event of biological or chemical attack has been stepped up; more personnel have been assigned to joint FBI anti-terrorism task forces, or task forces made up of other municipal agencies in the region; and virtually all have come up with innovative ways of handling situations which, prior to 9/11, were unheard of, such as the anthrax scare.

But the issues that seem to concern at least some law enforcement executives have less to do with the nuts-and-bolts of policing than with such questions as loyalty, civil rights and other touchstones of American life.

ARLINGTON — An attractive target

Over the past year, the Arlington County, Va., Police Department has been working on protocols for containing biological and chemical scenes and continuing to work with the fire department in developing haz-mat responses, said Police Chief Edward W. Flynn (right). At the same time, Congress has earmarked a special appropriation for the jurisdiction that will allow for significant enhancements in the communications and technological capabilities of its police and fire departments.

While an assessment of the uniformed services' performance during the 9/11 attacks had praise for both agencies, the county's communications system was roundly criticized [see LEN July/August 2002].

Police have also spent a significant amount of time in the community trying to help people come to terms with their concerns and providing them with useful information. One piece of information that the agency has tried to make clear to residents is that, long before the attack on the Pentagon, Arlington has always been an attractive target. Today, it is terrorists, Flynn noted, but for the better part of the past 50 years, it was Russian ICBMs. The only significant change, he said, are the methods chosen for the attack.

The nation is ill served, Flynn said, by an industry that has developed in the wake of Sept. 11, which articulates new and unprecedented threats that law enforcement can do nothing about. "Much of the last year has been spent going back and forth between trying to terrorize the American people with doomsday scenarios, while at the same time trying to come up with security measures that would promise invulnerability to future attacks," he said. "We have to accept the fact that we're a resilient people who are being faced with a significant challenge, and the national conversation that is yet to occur is what we are willing to give up in order to still maintain a recognizably American lifestyle."

Time needs to be spent on building up the morale of the American people, he said. "Americans need a role model right now, and they need to choose between London during the blitz or chicken little," he said.

What would be helpful at this point, Flynn told LEN, is the development of a plan for prioritizing possible sites for a terrorist attack. Not all of the nation's bridges, water filtration plants, dams and factories are equally vulnerable, despite what has been communicated to the public over the past year. "There is an old military dictum from the 1700s that says he who tries to defend everything defends nothing," he said.

Flynn also took aim at the news media, which he said has relentlessly focused its coverage on the federal response to terrorism in lieu of local departments, whose personnel will surely be the first responders. The capacity of the nation's municipal governments, he said, has only marginally been tapped.

"The feds are not going to be the first on the scene. As I've maintained before, what a lot of people didn't realize prior to Sept. 11 is that although terrorists may think globally, they act locally, and when they do, it's local police and fire departments that have to respond to the situation and take appropriate action."

MINNEAPOLIS — Ahead of the Curve

Always ahead of the curve in terms of disaster preparedness — although not necessarily for a terrorist attack — the biggest change after Sept. 11 for the Minneapolis Police Department has been in its relationship with federal law enforcement, said Chief Robert K. Olson.

"I've been very encouraged with the direction [FBI director] Bob Mueller has taken," he told LEN. "He put a group of folks from local law enforcement together to talk to him about enhancing communications; a lot of things came out of that. I was part of that process and [the FBI] has really reached out."



Olson, who also serves as president of the Police Executive Research Forum, said that creating an infrastructure by which information can be funneled to the nation's 600,000 or so local law enforcement personnel will be an ongoing process, one that he called a "monstrous undertaking" for municipal and federal agencies alike. "I think if you even ask the FBI, they don't have this model in their back pocket about what that needs to look like," he said. "I think that particular thing has been evolving over time."

There are so many systems, levels of security and priorities, said Olson, that it is going to be a while before everything gets worked out. One of the issues is security clearance for chiefs, as well as for members of joint terrorism task forces — one of the key measures to have been put in place in many jurisdictions since Sept. 11. "These things take time," said Olson.

As a city, Minneapolis has been proactive in developing disaster recovery plans since the mid-1990s. The department has already conducted an exercise involving a release of sarin gas, and its bomb unit, said Olson, is outfitted with Level 1 suits for biological and nerve warfare. All of the city's firefighters are trained in using those apparatus, he said.

"We're finding we have planning strategies we never considered in the past," said Olson. "We have a major medical center here in Minneapolis that has 86 doors. And if a hospital gets contaminated, you're in big trouble. It's caused a new wave of thinking for municipalities."

The department has also had to take into consideration the city's burgeoning immigrant population. Olson believes it is best to establish positive relationships with residents from the Middle East and other countries that have been implicated in terrorist activities.

"Community policing is what it really is, and we certainly support that continued vein," he said. "But at the same time, it puts some tensions on you, especially as we start dealing with the INS [Immigration and Naturalization Service]. It's problematic for many of our cities; you're trying to get a relationship going and at the same time, they're scared to death of you. And that doesn't work. That's something new which still has to be grappled with in many communities."

PASADENA — The Matrix

In Pasadena, Calif., which plays host to a number of events that draw national and international attention, including the Emmy Awards, the NAACP Image Awards, the Rose Parade and the Rose Bowl, new protocols were put into place within the month following Sept. 11, said Chief Bernard Melekian.

"It's an issue for us and we had some concerns," he told LEN.

A top priority was the development of a threat matrix that categorizes the continual stream of alerts from federal agencies into five levels, with the highest being a threat specifically against a target in the Southern California. Under the protocol, instead of calling in officers on overtime to patrol potential areas of attack, the department stops certain routine activities as the threat level increases. Only at the upper reaches are personnel called in.

"That seems to have worked pretty well," said Melekian (left). "I don't want to say the federal government copied us, but when they came out with their threat matrix, it was also five levels and very close to what we were doing."

The agency also created a counter-terrorism section consisting of a lieutenant and a corporal to provide a more active liaison with federal agencies, particularly the FBI. For a department of 248 sworn officers, he said, the unit represents a considerable dedication of resources.

Nationally, the flow of information between federal and local law enforcement has improved, Melekian observed, but one of the biggest stumbling blocks remains the FBI's insistence that

chiefs be given security clearance. While sounding fine in theory, the fact is that very few executives have received it so far, he said.

"It's a tedious process and I don't know how many thousands of police chiefs there are in the U.S. We're going to be a while on this," he said.

In order for police to be effective in the fight against terrorism, several things must occur, said Melekian. Putting training and tactical issues aside, local law enforcement has to be given a clearer description of what is expected of it and how it is expected to balance security issues and personal liberties.

"I have some real concerns, for example, about police chiefs who make statements that they are not going to cooperate with the federal government, as if this war on terrorism was something that was being manufactured in Washington, and was therefore Washington's problem," he said. "That's ridiculous."

The Pasadena department has modified its policies concerning the detention of immigrants who are believed to constitute a potential threat. While not proposing that police enforce immigration laws, Melekian said that with certain caveats, such persons would be arrested and held for a certain period of time, pending notification of the Immigration and Naturalization Service.

"I think that's sensible, but I'm still seeing comments in the press from chiefs around the country saying, 'I'm not going to do that,'" said Melekian. "I think there are a lot of people in and out of law enforcement who would like to go back to Sept. 10, 2001. That's just not going to happen."

SEATTLE — Avoiding 9/11 Fatigue

Training in intelligence analysis will be consuming much of the Seattle Police Department's time in the years to come, said its chief, Gil Kerlikowske.

Since Sept. 11, the department has raised terrorism to one of the top three or four items on its agenda, he told LEN, and is spending a significant amount of resources on the issue, including the creation of an assistant chief's position to deal with emergency preparedness.

"Before, that was just one of the duties handled by the assistant chief of operations," said Kerlikowske (right). "Now, of course, it's the full-time focus and attention of an assistant chief."

Local law enforcement at this point needs to understand how to interpret a system of threats and alerts, in order not to succumb to "9/11 fatigue," he said. "We're learning a lot more about intelligence, at least from a terrorist standpoint, than we ever have. I don't think law enforcement intelligence was designed very well to fit with the intelligence analysis involving terrorists and these world events. We're doing a lot of training."

As first responders, officers now have to be knowledgeable about a host of new subjects, including bioterrorism, said Kerlikowske.

"We hear repeatedly, and I think most of us would agree, that a terrorist attempt could actually be thwarted or stopped by a patrol officer on the midnight shift," he said, pointing as an example, to the 1999 arrest of Ahmed Ressam in Port Angeles, Wash. "[He] was arrested by a Customs agent here, bringing in explosives," he said. "It was a Customs agent doing her job, something didn't seem right, and [she] ended up preventing a pretty horrific event."

Ressam was allegedly planning to blow up an airport waiting room during the millennium celebration in Los Angeles.

DES MOINES — Ordnance and Anthrax

Bombarded with calls about possible anthrax-laced letters, the Des Moines Police Department last year developed a policy that became a model for the rest of the state. It was just one of dozens of changes within the jurisdiction over the past 12 months, according to Chief William Moulder.

The Des Moines PD has become partners with the U.S. attorneys office and the FBI in a joint anti-terrorism task force, he said. By dedicating one officer to it, Moulder said, he is able to maintain a local presence on investigations. "It's not Big Brother coming in and telling us whether we have a problem or not," he told LEN. "We're involved in it and I think it's well worth our participation to be there."

One of the biggest changes has been the new-found importance of the department's ordnance unit. While training had been



Continued on Page 7

Life after 9/11: Sizing up the changes (or lack thereof)

Continued from Page 6

conducted regularly prior to Sept. 11, bomb squad exercises have now become a priority item. During an incident several months ago in which a college student roamed through the Midwest placing bombs in mailboxes,



officers assigned to the unit became valuable advisers on how to track the bomber down. Although the alleged bomber, 21-year-old Luke JohnHelder, did not pass through Des Moines, police there worked closely with the FBI, said Moulder (left).

The department has also teamed up with the Polk County Sheriff's Department and other law enforcement agencies in the area to

purchase an intelligence-sharing system called Cop-Link. The software has an artificial intelligence component that takes data and combines it into "one hunk of information," said Moulder. That way, if an inquiry is made about a vehicle, person or event, officers do not have to call each agency to find out what information they might have.

"It's ultimately becoming a prototype for the state in how to go about this intelligence-sharing process," he said.

Moulder is particularly proud of the department's anthrax protocol. Instead of sending officers out in hazmat suits each time a call came in about a suspicious envelope, the agency was able to handle approximately two-thirds of them over the telephone. When a call came in, officers would ask a series of questions and at the end, if the caller's concerns had not been resolved, someone would be dispatched. After asking the same questions in person, the officer would collect the envelope.

"He'd say, 'We're going to hold this for 10 days and if at the end of 10 days you're still okay, we'll presume this wasn't anthrax and destroy it,'" said Moulder. "It was not uncommon for them to call us and say, 'You know that letter I thought was anthrax? It was actually a birthday card from grandma.' It was a win all the way around."

Among Moulder's key concerns is that block grants which provided money directly to local law enforcement are drying up, and federal funding coming through homeland security will be filtered through the state. "We really need to work in that area; everyone is clamoring for more money," he said. Pointing out that Des Moines has more residents than many entire counties in the state, Moulder said, "Sure, I'm the biggest city in the state, and want the most, but I have the greatest need, as well."

Agreeing with a number of fellow chiefs, he said communication between agencies remains a pressing issue. It is a problem that the Polk County Chiefs and Sheriff's Association tried solving prior to 9/11.

The police use a UHF radio system, while the county has an 800-megahertz system. "There are interoperability radio frequencies that are available," said Moulder. "The technologies are available and they exist. All we're talking about is the will and the money."

DETROIT — Beefing Up Borders

In Detroit, which has a busy international border crossing to Windsor, Ontario, a law enforcement presence was beefed up after Sept. 11, said Sgt. Ricardo Moore. Not only were local officers assigned there, but police agencies throughout the state were sent to relieve them, he told LEN. "I don't know how they handled it in their budgets, but they did come through and did not cost Detroit a dime," said Moore.

The strengthening of the borders, however, caused some disgruntlement in communities that felt the ebbing of their own law enforcement presence. Since that time, Moore said, patrols have been beefed up in Detroit's neighborhoods, as well.

Moore said that while the department is content with its level of preparedness, it needs to be ever-mindful that it is under alert and ever-conscious of the "cascading events" that could occur. In May, the Detroit PD had some indications that various apartment buildings in the area could be the targets of terrorists.

"We have since informed managers and workers at those buildings to [tell] residents that if they see anything out of the ordinary to inform local police," Moore told

LEN. "Thankfully, we haven't had many large-scale calls regarding those types of situations in apartments."

The police department is fortunate, he said, to have an FBI field office close at hand, as well. "I know I've had to call them a couple of times regarding some issues and they've been straightforward with me," said Moore. "It's been a great relationship with them."

PORTLAND — Disaster Decisions

While the Portland, Ore., Police Bureau has done much as other cities have — worked closely with the jurisdiction's joint terrorism task force on intelligence gathering, increased training and revitalized its plans "for the potential of terrorism to think the unthinkable" — the most significant accomplishment of the past year has been the development of the National Center for Disaster Decision Making, said Chief Mark Kroeker (left).



"This is a very significant concept and operation that, if it is successful, will be a \$74-million project over five years," he told LEN. "It will bring to Oregon people from politics, law enforcement and fire services

who are in decision-making roles in disasters for highly specific, high-technologically advanced simulation and classroom training."

There is a great deal of excitement both within the state and in Washington, D.C., for the project, said Kroeker. "Our U.S. senators are pushing it, so it's looking good," he said. "That's our major contribution to everything."

In the meantime, the department is still trying to meet the needs of the community. Portland's gang problem has not gone away, said Kroeker, nor has its drug problem. People are still breaking into cars and homes and crime is going up. "What we're doing now is pushing the community-policing agenda as hard as ever because there is a tendency to be distracted by things like terrorism while burglars are taking away the homes," he said.

A key issue, though, is funding. "I hope other cities don't have to face budget cuts in the face of terrorism threats," said Kroeker. "That's not a happy moment."

What Portland has begun doing, he said, is to bill visiting dignitaries for the huge cost to the police department's operating budget.

"I've said repeatedly to people who have come from Washington to visit us, if a disaster occurs, it won't be federal agencies that respond, other than later. It will be police officers, firefighters, at a local level," Kroeker said. "They need the help, the resources, the things that for the moment we are hard-pressed to find, given our budgetary downturns. It's been a year now and where's the beef?"

LOS ANGELES — Israeli Lessons

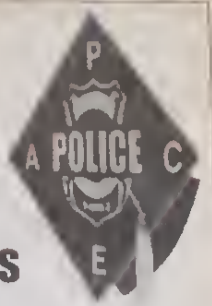
By the spring, the Los Angeles Police Department will begin training all of its personnel in terrorism response, having gone further afield than most by sending a few members of the department to Israel to observe how that country's security forces deal with suicide bombings.

"We wanted our personnel to go there, look at the way they do things, look at other situations, and then bring all that information back with a training plan," said Lieut. Horace Frank of the LAPD's media relations unit.

In the meantime, the department has been conducting in-house training, working closely with other agencies at the local and federal level, he told LEN. A joint training exercise was recently staged involving a potential terrorist situation aboard a cruise ship in Los Angeles harbor. The LAPD's SWAT team, its metro division, haz-mat and air support units, the city's fire department and the U.S. Coast Guard all participated. A similar exercise is planned for LAX airport in the near future, said Frank.

One of the steps that former chief Bernard Parks took immediately following Sept. 11, Frank noted, was directing all of the agency's substations to identify critical locations in their areas. Some 400 of these were taken into account, including houses of worship, water and fire facilities, and high-rise towers. "We feel very confident in where we are right now, in terms of things we had in place pre-Sept. 11 and post-Sept. 11," said Frank.

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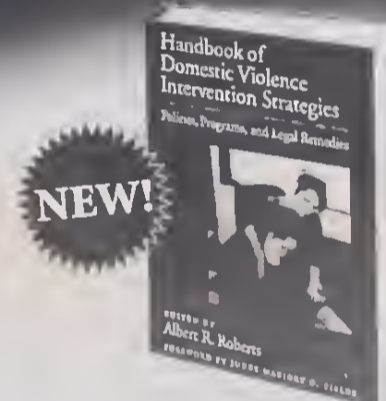
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—Vincent L. Henry Ph.D., recently retired after a 21 year career with the New York City Police Department, where he developed domestic violence policies and programs as commanding officer of the Office of Management Analysis and Planning's Special Projects Unit. He is now an associate professor of criminal justice at Pace University in Manhattan (from Law Enforcement News July/August 2002)

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Twitches, tics & blinks make for "body of evidence"

Words may deceive, but the body doesn't lie. At least that's what's behind the science of analyzing non-verbal behavior, or body language, such as twitches, blinks and other hints that federal law enforcement agencies believe will help agents identify not only drug couriers, but potential terrorists.

Even prior to the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, some law enforcement agencies had been training personnel in reading these clues. Suspicious body language and behavior led to the capture in 1999 of Ahmed Ressaam, a man who confessed to planning to disrupt the millennium celebration in Los Angeles. Ressaam was caught in Port Angeles, Wash., by a U.S. customs inspector who was checking cars coming off a

ferry. Ressaam failed to make eye contact and toyed with his car's console while Insp. Diana Dean spoke with him. After asking him to leave his vehicle, a stack of bomb components was found inside.

Dean told *The Wall Street Journal* that the incident was a "wake-up call" for the Customs Service. "When I look at everybody now, I leave open the possibility that they could be a terrorist. That's the way every inspector is being trained now," she said.

All Customs agents are now required to watch an instructional video on the subject. Instead of listening to what suspects say, inspectors are taught to watch what they do and ask questions designed to increase stress levels.

"Now, not all these factors mean that these people are guilty, some people are just naturally nervous," said Jerry Pavone, a supervisory Customs inspector at JFK International Airport who underwent the agency's training in non-verbal behavior this year.

"People who try to avoid looking at me directly, that's one I like very much," Pavone told *Law Enforcement News*. "When you get up a little closer, you see they're starting to get a little nervous, a little sweaty. That's another one I look at. You can actually see the carotid artery pumping. Nervous, jittery, fidgety — that's some of the things I look for."

Using the body language training can help inspectors identify both drug

mules as well as terrorists, said Pavone. After Jamaican and Colombian women were forced to take laxatives by Customs agents in an unsuccessful effort to find drugs, the agency overhauled its methods and began focusing on specific behaviors and one-on-one interviews. Its interdiction success rate rose from 4.2 percent in 1998 to 22.5 percent.

Last month, the FBI said it would be expanding the amount of time new agents trained in counterterrorism and counterintelligence at its Quantico, Va., academy. Part of the instruction will be in learning to analyze body language.

"Training includes deciphering all the clues you can get — not just what someone tells you in an interview, but all the signals they may give off," Roger Trott, who heads the new program, told *The Associated Press*. Instead of 23 hours, agents will now receive 55 hours. "It is very rare that time is added on to new agent training," he said.

Paul Ekman, a psychologist at the University of California-San Francisco, is credited with developing much of the science of reading non-verbal cues. In his work, Ekman posits that brains are all similarly wired to the muscles under skin of the face. Some expressions, such as blinking when nervous, or widening our eyes when excited, are universal and cannot be suppressed because they are caused by involuntary muscle movement.

Micro-expressions, as he calls them, can last less than 0.2 seconds, but may reveal a subject's true emotions. During interrogations, Customs inspectors are trained to look at a suspect's face for such things as a fleeting smile that may indicate "duping delight," which occurs when an individual believes he has put something over on his interviewer.

Ekman told *The Journal* that in July he had received videotapes of 250 convicted criminals and their accomplices — some of whom might have been involved in terrorism — under a contract from the Defense Department, which asked Ekman to analyze their facial expressions. He will be looking for signs of disdain, he said. "These people

have nothing but contempt for the people they are about to prey on," said Ekman.

But analyzing one individual's body movements and behavior in an interrogation room is a far cry from being able to spot the one person who may be a terrorist at a busy airport. To this end, the CIA has commissioned the Salk Institute in La Jolla, Calif., and Carnegie Mellon University's Robotics Institute to teach detailed facial-language cues to computers.

Terrence Sejnowski, a Salk Institute researcher, said a minute's worth of interview, which could take a trained observer an hour to analyze, could be done by a computer in real time.

Secant Aviation Security Inc. is developing a software program that would automate much of the behavior analysis done by the Israeli airline El Al, which pioneered the observation of body language and behavioral surveillance during the 1970s. In more than 30 years, El Al has not had a hijacking, security experts note.

Secant is a New York-based firm founded by Israeli intelligence veterans. Its software uses hidden surveillance technology, such as voice-stress sensors. As a passenger passes various points throughout an airport, data is collected by the computer. For example, if nervousness were detected in the voice of a woman when she went through security — and other risk factors were present — security personnel might be alerted to stop her for questioning.

But not everyone in law enforcement is a believer in behavioral surveillance. "As we develop techniques and they become publicized, the enemy will become aware of it and will develop countermeasures," said Jack Devine, a former CIA official who now heads the Arkin Group, an investigative firm. "This is an age-old cycle."

Frederick Lawrence, a law professor at Boston University, said it may not be long before the first privacy lawsuit. "Police have said 'Let us use our judgment,' but we as a freedom-loving society have said 'that's way too much discretion to give law enforcement.'"

Fed auditors want Albuquerque to ante up millions in COPS funds

It has been at least three years since Justice Department auditors began questioning Albuquerque officials about their use of a multimillion-dollar COPS grant, but the city seems no closer to being off the hook with the federal government than it did in 1999.

Federal auditors informed local officials in August that the city could be forced to ante up \$7.6 million in allegedly misspent funds. The sum includes \$4.1 million that the Justice Department claims was used to supplant municipal dollars while not adding any new officers, and an additional \$3.5 million that Albuquerque was expecting.

"The Inspector General's office has requested specific documentation from us, and we're in the process of gathering it and we will hand it over to them," Sgt. Beth Baland, a police department spokeswoman, told *Law Enforcement News*. "The only reason we're being audited is because we've hit some type of qualifier. From what we understand it's not anything we've done wrong."

Problems with justifying the use of COPS grants have been an ongoing issue for Albuquerque. For several

months in 1999, the question of whether Albuquerque would receive a \$6.5-million grant from the Universal Hiring Program had hung in the air. The Justice Department finally satisfied itself in September of that year that the city was not going to use the funds to replace officers, but to hire new ones.

The \$6.5 million was to be used to pay 55 officers over a three-year period. In 1998, when the city had applied for the grant, the department cited a baseline of 891 officers, with 850 of those positions filled. But suspicions arose that year when the base level of locally-funded sworn personnel fell to 849. Although the city claimed that the reduction-in-force would have occurred even without the expectation of the COPS grants, attorneys for the COPS program saw a direct connection between the reduction and the hiring grant. [See *LEN*, Oct. 31, 1999.]

In a report issued last month, which city officials said they would challenge, auditors charged that during the administration of former mayor Jim Baca, the police force fell from 914 officers in 1997 to 875 in 2001 — the period when

most of the grant money was received. This, it said, allowed the city to divert funds elsewhere. The report also cites a videotape in which Police Chief Jerry Galvin tells the City Council in 1999 that had Albuquerque not received a COPS grant, he would have had to use local funds to cover personnel costs.

The report also contended that while federal dollars given to the city increased fourfold in 2000, a municipal budget study cited a "nearly unchanged level of funding for the police department." Auditors said grant money was used for such unallowable costs as clothing allowances, employee benefits, longevity pay and incentives. In addition, they said, money awarded for the purchase of computers, printers and other equipment to aid in community policing activities was "overfunded" to the tune of \$72,107, including some items that were not purchased.

"This clearly is more problematic than we first thought," said Mayor Martin Chavez. "A \$7-million hit on our police budget, particularly if it comes in one fiscal year, would be devastating."

Armed & ready:

Medical trauma team rolls with SWAT

Continued from Page 1 called out by that agency.

Wipfler and the other doctors and paramedics on STATT have completed the state's mandatory 40-hour firearms training course, and they train with both the county and city's SWAT units.

"We have some pretty strict guidelines about what they can do and what they can't do," Sheriff Mike McCoy told *LEN*. "They're not the primary people to enter a building. We don't want them doing that, that's not their expertise."

The need for medical personnel to draw their weapons is extremely unusual, acknowledged Wipfler.

"We've never had to do it," he said. "There's really no reason to. In fact, you can make some good arguments for not carrying weapons, considering we're there not only to take care of police officers but injured suspects and hostages. Having a gun right next to your side, right next to a suspect, may not be a good idea."

But in a medical situation, he said,

the doctors need someone watching their backs. The unit functions as two-man teams at a minimum. When the call-out comes from the sheriff's department, there might only be seven to eight deputies on the raid, meaning that the doctors and paramedics have to watch out for themselves and their patients. "That's one of the main reasons we're armed with the county," he said.

McCoy agreed. In the case of a school shooting, he noted, there might not be 25 officers on hand to cover the doctors and EMTs. While it might be easier to train police to function as paramedics, he said, it would not be the same as having doctors on hand.

"If you get shot, do you want someone handling you who works as a full-time physician in an emergency room who sees these all the time, or do you want the person trained as an EMT?" he asked. "The answer is in my case, if one of my guys is shot and I have the opportunity to have an emergency-room physician trained doctor there, that's who I want."



A Peoria STATT officer provides tactical emergency medical service while approaching a downed officer during a recent training drill. (Courtesy John Wipfler, M.D.)

Young:

Nothing small-time about pickpockets

By David Young

Pickpockets have been plying their trade for as long as people have been carrying money around on their persons. Successful pickpockets are very good at what they do. A considerable number of pickpockets began their careers during their adolescence and, after many years experience, have perfected their techniques to the degree that they can be considered true professionals.

A number of factors exist which increase the opportunities for a pickpocket to commit a theft. Moreover, other factors exist which reduce the risk that the pickpocket will be caught, prosecuted and penalized in a manner consistent with the seriousness of the crime.

It is generally true that this type of offense is most common in places where large groups of people gather. Transportation facilities, such as bus terminals and railroad stations, are favorite hunting grounds for pickpockets, but it is just as likely that a crowded department store, public arena or city street will supply enough potential victims to make it worth the effort.

During the author's tenure as a criminal investigator with the Amtrak Police Department, a number of trends were observed with respect to pickpocket incidents occurring in Penn Station in New York or onboard commuter trains. The information is gleaned from careful compilation and

analysis of data relating to station larcenies and onboard train larcenies, as well as work relating to subsequent investigations. This article, based as it is on the author's experience and observation, focuses on the dynamics of the crime as it pertains to rail transportation facilities.

The victim was most often a female railroad customer in her 30's. Pickpocket incidents also increased during cold weather and around holidays. The most likely places for thefts to occur were on the escalators, on platforms and onboard trains near the doors of the car.

There was no significant correlation noted between race and victimization.

Pickpocket incidents occurred most often during evening rush hours or peak shopping periods. While the latter events were usually found to have occurred outside of the station, the victims in such cases often reported the theft to Amtrak Police because of the highly visible substation in the terminal's main concourse.

A transportation facility is by definition, a public accommodation and, the public is permitted almost unrestricted access to the common areas of the terminal. Thousands of people pass through every day and holiday travel increases customer volume dramatically. Pickpockets know this to be true and will spend hours in the station or terminal watching the crowds and searching for potential targets.

Most often, an interview with the victim conducted during the preliminary phase of the investigation revealed that the victim had her wallet exposed during the half-hour prior to the theft, and that she then put the wallet in her bag, purse or knapsack. The wallet was usually placed near the top of everything else in the bag, making it easily accessible once the bag was opened. It did not matter how the bag was secured. Whether by snap, buckle, zipper or Velcro, these closing devices are only minor obstacles for the professional pickpocket. Most pocketbooks are designed for style, not security.

The bag itself was often unintentionally placed in an exposed position on the victim's person. Most victims have a tendency to carry the bag over one shoulder. The pickpocket maintains surveillance on the victim and waits for the bag to slip into a vulnerable position to the rear of the victim instead of at a more secure place under her arm or toward the front of her body. A wallet placed in an outer compartment of a knapsack and worn over the shoulders is an easy target for even the novice pickpocket.

It is likely that the cold weather was a factor because both the pickpocket and the victim are wearing more clothing, which facilitates the pickpocket's ability to commit the crime. The extra layers reduce the victim's sense of bodily awareness and provide the pickpocket with added

cover by shielding his movements during commission of the crime. Extra clothes also provide a place to hide the stolen property in the event he is caught.

Sometimes the pickpocket simply sheds an outer layer of clothing for one of a different color that he had been wearing underneath, thereby confusing the issue of identification by the victim and in "be on the lookout" broadcasts to police. This tactic is also used in warmer weather. The outer garment can either be discarded or hidden in a plastic bag carried by the pickpocket for this purpose.

Possibly the most significant factor in the victim profile is psychological. A crowded terminal creates a distracting environment. People are packed together in cramped waiting areas listening for public address announcements or watching a departure board. They are likely to be focused on the day that just ended or the evening that lies ahead. The person carrying packages or talking on a cellular telephone is even more likely to be distracted.

The victim, pre-conditioned by the rush hour environment of the station, is accustomed to being in close physical proximity to others. The victim also expects to have even less personal space when descending the escalators and riding the train. The victim is likely to be focused more on boarding the train and finding a seat than to be concerned with others on the stairs. Simply put, people who use mass transit expect to be bumped and jostled.

The pickpocket events occurring during the rush hours were quite interesting because a pattern of behavior on the part of the pickpocket became evident. The evening rush hour would usually start between 4:30 and 5:00 p.m. and last until 7:30 or 8:00 p.m., and the first victims would usually begin to make their reports after 6:00 p.m.

The typical victim was a female New Jersey Transit customer boarding a crowded train who was "bumped" just as she stepped into the train. This usually happened a few seconds before the scheduled departure time for the train so that the male who bumped the victim would simply step off the train and let the doors close behind him. The victim would frequently realize her wallet was stolen but would be unable to get off the train and have to travel onto Newark before she could get off and make a report.

It only takes about 18 minutes to go from Penn Station New York to Newark's Penn Station, but that's more than enough time for the pickpocket to run up hundreds of dollars worth of unauthorized purchases using the victim's credit cards. Experience and observation show that the cards were usually used within the first five minutes after the theft — while the victim is still in the tunnel beneath the Hudson River, unable even to use a cell phone. The advantage, clearly, goes to the pickpocket, unless the potential victim is made aware of her vulnerability and takes steps to become a harder target.

(David Young is a former criminal investigator with the Amtrak Police Department and a 1996 graduate of the Bureau of Municipal Police program run by John Jay College of Criminal Justice. He is currently an investigator with a New Jersey state agency.)

Other Voices

(A roundup of editorial views on criminal justice issues from the nation's newspapers.)

A Flawed Chase Policy

Findings in a National Institute of Justice report issued in 1997 should have been enough to convince police in St. Louis to abandon most high-speed chases. That study concluded that these hot pursuits usually are counterproductive, with 40 percent resulting in accidents, 20 percent in injuries and 1 percent in somebody being killed, usually an officer or innocent bystander or motorist.

That sad outcome played out Thursday night when police apparently pursued a stolen vehicle occupied by six teenagers. The chase ended in a deadly crash in which Officer Michael Barwick was killed and his partner was seriously injured. Two other police officers were injured when pulling their colleagues from the burning cruiser.

At least seven people have been killed since 2000 in connection with high speed chases in the city. Chief Joe Mokwa says the officers in Thursday night's incident did not appear to violate the chase policy, which allows chases where the suspects are endangering the public.

The Police Board needs to review and change the chase policy. It should be guided by the Institute of Justice study, done by criminologist Geoffrey P. Alpert of the University of South Carolina. In a 2000 interview with *The Post-Dispatch*, Mr. Alpert noted that cops wouldn't think of shooting into a crowd, but they think nothing of engaging in high-speed chases in crowded neighborhoods or thick traffic. Mr. Alpert says, "cops need to recognize that pursuits are deadlier than guns because they are used more often."

That's not to say St. Louis should disarm its cops or forbid them to conduct chases under certain circumstances. Why not limit chases to those involving violent felons who threaten the officer or the public? That's sensible because the benefits of potential arrests from chases do not outweigh the risks of injuries to police and the public.

— *The St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Sept. 1, 2002*

Quick 911 Response Relies on Proper Use

The speed or its perceived lack, with which the Memphis Police Department responds to 911 emergency calls is a chronic source of citizen complaints. It's hard to tell whether 911 service is much better or worse here than in similar U.S. cities, because few comparative data exist. But as local officials make physical improvements to the system, a campaign that would let citizens know when to call 911 — and when not to — also could accelerate emergency response times.

County 911 officials say the installation of new computer equipment over the next few months will give the emergency communications system its most extensive upgrade in nearly two decades. The Memphis Police Department plans to hire more operators to take 911 calls. Both initiatives should speed response time. But neither improvement will directly address one of the biggest obstacles to the

efficiency of the system: Far too many 911 calls are hang-ups, duplicate reports or, worse, non-emergencies.

Tying up a 911 line to complain about a barking dog or an open hydrant, hampering the ability of police to set response priorities, dispatch manpower and deal with life-threatening incidents, is simply inexcusable. The system depends on a reasonable exercise of self-restraint by its users. At the same time, local officials need to ask whether they are doing all they can to discourage misuse of the 911 system, and to educate citizens about calling other phone numbers to report both emergencies and more routine problems.

Police departments in several large cities operate a separate three-digit phone number, 311, for non-emergency calls. When the Federal Communications Commission made the 311 code available to police departments nationwide in 1997, officials of Shelby County's 911 system said they saw no need for such a system here. It seems time at least to revisit that decision.

No response seems fast enough when the emergency is yours. Citizens who subsidize the 911 system have a right to expect an appropriate response to a call for help that involves protection of their lives and property. But they have a corresponding responsibility not to abuse 911. Users and operators of the system have a common, and potentially life-saving, interest in promoting the system's proper use.

— *The Memphis Commercial Appeal, Aug. 25, 2002*

Forfeiture Reform Cuts Police Profit Motive

Up until recently, law enforcement officers were empowered to seize the property of suspected drug dealers, even if no conviction had ever been won or a formal charge filed. While many of these suspects were ultimately convicted, and all have always had the right to an attorney who could contest the forfeiture, the system was unfairly slanted. More troubling, the assets seized by local police or sheriffs would simply flow to their agency budget. This created both a slush fund and an incentive to pursue forfeitures so officers could buy items not authorized or funded by locally elected legislative bodies.

As of July 1, a new law took effect that reformed the system. Now, a conviction must first be obtained before a civil lawsuit seeking forfeiture can be brought. If successful, the forfeited funds or other assets will go to the particular level of government's general fund after storage costs and victim restitution.

Many law enforcement officers argue that underfunded police agencies will suffer further. They also make the point that local officers will be encouraged to seek federal involvement in their cases, as federal forfeiture law still provides for an 80 percent return to local jurisdictions. But, the bounty system programmed a distortion into law enforcement priorities. Only policy-making legislatures should be in the business of appropriating public funds, and profit-motive incentives should be excised from police work.

— *The Albuquerque (N.M.) Journal, Aug. 27, 2002*

Note to Readers:

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Fiery Crown Vics are focus of lawsuits

Continued from Page 1

2000 and 2001, all of which led to injuries or deaths. However, none of those cases involved an Ohio police car.

Cleveland, which has 481 Crown Victoria police cars in its fleet, is seeking unspecified compensatory and punitive damages from Ford for allegedly selling unsafe cars.

In July, officials in Nueces County, Texas, sued Ford on behalf of all of the state's counties and cities. The suit would force Ford to make immediate safety modifications to about 25,000 Crown Victoria police cruisers in Texas at the company's own expense. Ford would also have to notify all law enforcement agencies about safety concerns.

Also that month, Okaloosa County, Fla., Sheriff Charlie Morris filed a class-action lawsuit on behalf of all "counties, municipalities and other political subdivisions within the state of Florida which have purchased or leased" the vehicles.

"We're hoping that Ford Motor Co. will make the decision to fix the automobiles before there is any loss of life or serious injuries," chief deputy Fred Cobb told The AP. "We ought not to wait around for someone to be killed

or seriously hurt."

So far, there have been no problems with the fuel tanks of the agency's 200-vehicle fleet, said Morris.

Jefferson Parish, La., Sheriff Harry Lee filed a similar lawsuit in July, in which he was joined by the Gretna Police Department and the Terrebonne Parish Consolidated Government. A Louisiana State Police trooper, Hung Le, 29, of Marrero, died at a Houston hospital burn center about six weeks after an accident in which his Crown Victoria burst into flames.

"Harry Lee wants his guys riding around in the best possible police vehicle there is," said Conrad Williams, the plaintiffs' attorney. "If there's a potential problem in the vehicles his deputies are using, he wants it fixed."

Clarence Ditlow, executive director of the Center for Auto Safety, in a letter to the company officials and reported by The AP, said: "How can Ford Motor Co. justify not recalling a vehicle involved in at least 10 fatal fire crashes of police officers since 1992 and at least 13 civilian deaths listed in FARS [a federal accident database] as caused by fire between 1994 and 2000."

Joan Claybrook, a former head of the National Highway Traffic Safety

Administration who now heads the non-profit group Public Citizen, also demanded the cars be recalled.

But Arizona Attorney General Napolitano said she was satisfied with Ford's response. Two investigative panels will be created: One will be a technical task force; the other will work on accident prevention. Both will be led by a Ford official. The technical task force, which will include engineers from Ford, the race car industry and experts from the aircraft industry, should complete its work within 30 to 90 days, Napolitano told The AP.

"This sets us on a concrete path to make these cars safer," she said.

According to Ford's vice president of environmental and safety engineering, Sue Cischke, the fuel tank's location is not the problem. A technical service bulletin has been issued, she said, for replacing a bolt that was the "source of puncture" of one of the Arizona accidents.

Cischke defended the car's safety and reliability, noting that the accidents occurred in a high-speed environment.

Said Arizona DPS Director Dennis Garrett: "I don't know what the solution is to that, because that is part of the job."

DPS has 1,800 Crown Victorias, which make up the majority of the agency's fleet. "I'm very uncomfortable with the fact that we have police officers that are involved in rear-end crashes that are burning up," Garrett told The AP. "The question is what can be done about it..."

The Phoenix City Council voted last month to retrofit all of the department's fleet of 735 Crown Victorias with bladder bag-type gas tanks, which would reduce the chances of a puncture. "The Council awarded a \$4.5-million contract for another 200 Crown Victorias over the next two-year period, and that was on the 22nd of May," said Jake Jacobsen, president of the Phoenix Law Enforcement Association. It has since voted to freeze that order, he told Law Enforcement News.

Jacobsen's group had a bladder bag tested for heat, crashes and other situations. It is basically a foam-filled bladder placed in a steel can that holds the fuel. If it is hit or smashed, the bladder conforms to the can's shape and blocks the fuel from leaking. Check valves automatically prevent further spillage should the vehicle turn over.

"So far, it's performing flawlessly, it's not leaking, it's not vapor-locking," he said. "Our city will request that Ford pay for the retrofit and offer this or something comparable as a safety feature on any further purchases of Crown Victorias. That's been our issue all along. We know the Crown Victoria is a good, full-size police car that meets all our needs, but we do have these safety concerns."

While Ford said it is willing to look at new technology, no such fuel tank has been crash-tested for a production

vehicle, it said. The company's inquiry ran into a roadblock in August when a supplier in Bend, Ore., told Ford it did not have any fuel cell bladders available because of a commitment to supply the component to the Phoenix Police Department, said Cischke, the Ford vice president.

"We're working with the attorney general's office as well to get some parts for testing, because we want to make sure we're not creating a more dangerous situation," she said.

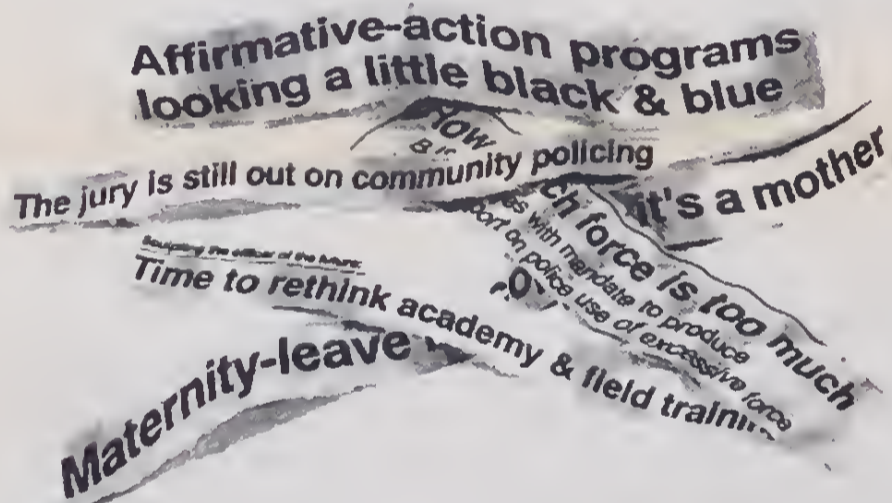
Some of the options being considered, in addition to bladder tanks, are trunk design changes and the replacement of gasoline-burning Police Interceptors with ones that run on compressed natural gas, a suggestion made by Mesa officials.

"The Crown Victoria is a very safe car in normal day-to-day family use," said Jacobsen, who is also a board member of the National Association of Police Organizations. "The issue is police cars don't get hit at those speeds. They're on freeways. They're going to be hit by the drunks, by the drivers who are out of control." Jacobsen said that after Phoenix stopped its order of Crown Victorias, so did several other cities in the region, and then Gov. Jane Hull "stepped up and said the state would stop ordering them also."

Hull ordered the state's Department of Public Safety to temporarily halt future purchases of the vehicles and has pushed for an investigation by NHTSA.

David Manning, NHTSA's regional director, said the agency has been investigating rear-end crashes for the past eight months, but was forbidden by federal law from discussing the status of the probe.

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Law Enforcement News

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NYC cops finally have their contract

Continued from Page 1

achieved without any givebacks by union members.

"We didn't get a great deal," he told The Daily News. "But we did better than all the other unions...Is it enough money? No."

The raise will boost rookie officers' salaries from \$31,305 to \$34,514, and increase the top base pay after 20 years of service from \$49,023 to \$54,048.

Even with the raise, however, New York City officers still make far less than their counterparts in other jurisdictions. The job-vacancy link added last month to the PBA's Web site shows nearly all listed agencies offering starting salaries higher than that of the NYPD.

According to the Web site, while the NYPD starts its officers at \$31,305, the city of Seattle pays a far more lucrative \$46,146. Fort Lauderdale, which has immediate openings, offers \$39,686. Officers in Santa Cruz can make \$4,000 a month, and in Irvine, Calif., police earn \$46,463.

"New York City's police officers are presently the most overworked and underpaid in the nation, or at least among the most overworked, underpaid, in the nation," said O'Leary.

In an interview with Law Enforcement News prior to the contract settlement, O'Leary said: "We're struggling for a contract here to fairly compensate our officers, and in the meantime, if

they can't make a living here, we're going to help find them a place where they can pursue their passion for law enforcement, but get appropriately paid for it."

The timing of the information's addition to the Web site was deliberate, O'Leary had said. On Aug. 15, the PBA held a rally in Times Square, bringing together police, firefighters and union officials, along with relatives of those killed on Sept. 11, 2001.

While no city can pay officers what the job is worth, considering the risks, said O'Leary, what New York can do is offer a salary that will allow police to support their families with one job. "It shouldn't be full-time heroes with part-time jobs," he said.

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Is there a doctor in the house?

There are some on the SWAT teams in Peoria, Ill., armed and ready to roll. **Page 1.**



KA-BOOM!



Why the most popular police car in America may not be the safest (and what's being done about it). **Page 1.**

The more things change...

The more, it seems, there is to do. Police executives size up what's been done, and what's left on the "to-do" list, in the 12 months since 9/11. **Page 6.**

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What They Are Saying:

"If they can't make a living here, we're going to help find them a place where they can pursue their passion for law enforcement, but get appropriately paid for it."

— Al O'Leary, spokesman for the New York City Patrolmen's Benevolent Association, after the union began posting out-of-town job listings for members on its Web site. (Story, Page 1.)